

**14**

**FEDERAL FIREARMS AMENDMENTS OF 1966**

***Paragraph (1)***

The definition of the term "person" in paragraph (1) of the bill is unchanged from the existing law (15 U.S.C. 901(1)).

***Paragraph (2)***

Paragraph (2) of section 1 of the bill adds a new definition "State" to simplify and clarify later provisions of the bill and the existing law. The Canal Zone is included in the definition. Previously it was excluded. Also included are the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands, and American Samoa, the principal Commonwealth and possessions of the United States.

***Paragraph (3)***

Paragraph (3) restates the existing definition of "interstate or foreign commerce" (15 U.S.C. 901(2)). However, language has been removed that has been defined in paragraph (2) above.

***Paragraph (4)***

Paragraph (4) restates the definition of "firearm" and revises it to exclude from the act antique firearms made in 1898 or earlier. Also mufflers and silencers for firearms are removed from the definition.

The year 1898 was selected as the "cutoff" date on the basis of testimony presented to Congress by several gun collectors organizations and to be consistent with the regulations on importation of firearms issued by the Department of State pursuant to section 414 of the Mutual Security Act of 1954.

Mufflers and silencers for firearms are excluded from coverage since these items are included presently in the National Firearms Act (Ch. 53 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954). This act provides for heavy transfer taxes and registration of all such items.

Also excluded from the present definition of the term "firearm" is "any part or parts" of a firearm. Experience in the administration of the Federal Firearms Act has indicated that it is impractical to treat each small part as if it were a firearm. The revised definition substitutes the words "frame or receiver" for the words "any part or parts."

Added to the term "firearm" are weapons which "may be readily converted to" a firearm. The purpose of this addition is to include specifically any starter gun designed for use with blank ammunition which will or which may be readily converted to expel a projectile or projectiles by the action of an explosive. Such so-called starter pistols have been found to be a matter of serious concern to law enforcement officers.

***Paragraph (5)***

The definition of the term "handgun" in paragraph (5) is a new provision. This definition is necessary because of later provisions of the bill which have application solely to these firearms. There is no intention that handguns be exempted from any of the other provision of the bill since a handgun is a firearm within the meaning of paragraph (4) above.

The term includes "pistols," "revolvers" and "any other weapons originally designed to be fired by the use of a single hand" which are made to be fired by the use of a single hand and which are designed to fire or are capable of firing fixed cartridge ammunition.